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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

40¢

VOL. 6 NO. 18
SECOND ISSUE OF
OCTOBER 1976
#140

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THE COVER STORY

October 24 was the last seasonal run of Southern Railway's SKYLAND SPECIAL, the weekends-and-holidays excursion train between Asheville and Old Fort. In this photo, two green F units bring the train into Old Fort, NC, its eastern terminus, last August 29. The SPECIAL was not wyed at Old Fort; the engines were run around the train to couple onto parlor-dome 1602 for the trip back to Asheville. Photo by R. Lyle Key, Jr.

CARS & CONSISTS

*SAN JOAQUIN, train 710, Oct 18 (1st Amfleet run): engines 229, 219 (F40's); cars 21829, 21830, Amdinette 20216, 21828, 21831 (21800-series are 60-seat legrest Amcoaches). Train 711, Oct 18 (last conventional equip't run): engine 543; cars 1601, 8110, 6802, 6800, 3501.

*FLORIDIAN, train 56, Birmingham, Oct 21: engines 603, 609 (SDP's); cars 1063, 1197 (mail cars JAX-CHI), 1519, 2781 "Darlington County", 8086, 5617, dome 9453, (St. Pete-Chic.:) 5474, 3632 "Henry Knox", 2684.

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6, Oakland, Oct 9: engines 704 (P30, returning East after bringing Amfleet cars West for SAN JOAQUIN), 581, 583 (SDP's); cars 1590, 5014, 4814, 4812, 4472, 3332, 8051, 2615, 2639, 7519, 7520,

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 2, L.A. Oct 8: engines (?); cars (baggage?), 9931, 9943, 9958, 9926, 3393, 8035, 2501 "Blue Grove", 2602 "Pacific Beauty", 3260 "Wingate Brook" observation, SP 107 business car "Del Monte."

*Pacific RR Society special train L.A.-Klamath Falls, L.A. Oct 8: engines 616, 552 (SDP's); Overland "Tehachapi", Overland 1212 "National View", PAR #2 "Timothy Blackstone", 2265 "Placid Scene", "Chippewa Creek", PAR #1 "Imperial Bird", 2212 "Indian Falls", Overland lounge "Afton Canyon", PRS diner "Starlight Cafe", 2755 "Palm Lore", 2766 "Savannah", 2365 "Regal Hill", 4865, 4867, observation "Hulham."

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, Glendale, Oct 2: engines 375 (F unit), 555, 559; cars 1045, 1500 "San Miguel", 4866, 4500, 4858, 4871, 4861, 4857, dome 9370, 8038, 2713 "Pine Cavern", 2501 "Blue Grove", 1378 (deadhead-Oak.), 20217 (deadhead-Oak.).

*Train 117, Metroliner replacement, Capital Beltway, Oct 11: engine X995 (Swedish ASEA Rc4a); Amclub 20112, Amcoaches 21127, 21168, Amclub 20115, power car 1297.

*COLONIAL, train 167, Capital Beltway, Oct 11: engine 967 (E60); cars 1375, 20114, 21159, 21157, 21022, 21040, 20002, 21081.

*Train 221, NY-Phila "clocker", Newark, Oct 13: engine 966 (E60); cars 21816, 21122, 21808, 21826, 21129, 21177, 21068, 21064, 21134, 21034.

*VALLEY FORGE, train 43, Newark Oct 12: engine 909 (GG-1); cars 7409, 7410, 7401, 3710, 7403, 7427, 7426.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 3, Kansas City, Oct 10: engines 512, 619; cars 1040, 9994, 9912, 9925, 9953, 9974, 9923, 2213 "Indian Flute", 8070, 9355, 2757 "Palm Star", 2706 "Athens" (thru car), 1170, 1352 (deadhead-L.A.), T-158 (Rohr Turbo power car, deadhead-L.A.).

*LONE STAR, train 16, Kansas City, Oct 10: engines 500, 614; cars 1171, 2718 "Pine Dawn", 8036, 3392, 9914, 9932, 9930, 2754 "Palm Loch", ATSF business cars 51 & 55 deadheading to Chicago.

*CANADIAN, CPR train 1, Montreal, Sep 25: engines (?); cars 616, 115, Skyline 503, diner "Champlain", slprs "Laird Manor", "Evangeline Park."

*CN train 668, Kitchener, Ont., Oct 15: Railiners 6119, 6113, 6003, 6000, 6401 bag.

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SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR FLIES OFF THE TRACK

The eastbound SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR was almost to its Chicago destination Oct 18 when the train suddenly derailed in the middle and split apart. The incident happened at a speed of 50mph near Cicero, in the southwest Chicago area on BN tracks. Of the 11 cars, the last 8 derailed, with the train pulling apart behind the fifth car. The sketch at left illustrates how the train ended up, with almost a city block's length between the two sections. Forty-three people were reported injured, out of the 113 passengers plus crew, most of them from the last six cars. Some of the cars tilted, but none overturned. The cause of the wreck was being investigated. None of the injuries was evidently serious.

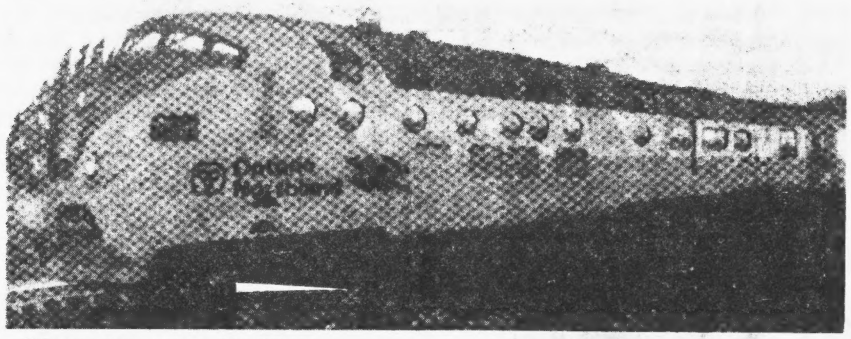
MORE NEWS OF CAMPAIGN TRAINS

The elections of 1976 will be history as most readers read this issue of RTN, and they will be better able to assess the effectiveness of campaigning by train, a phenomenon that has grown surprisingly large this year. President Ford's Illinois campaign train of Oct 16 was reported upon in the New York Times of the 17th, which pictured the rear of Amtrak observation car 10,000 with the name "The 'Honest Abe'" lettered above the open platform. The train was scheduled to run from Joliet IL to St. Louis MO, and Pres. Ford rode it from Joliet to Alton. Senator Charles Percy and other political figures participated in the Amfleet run. Senator James L. Buckley of New York used a campaign of "old-fashioned" cars from Albany to Buffalo NY on Oct 2. The consist of Buckley's train was two SDP40F engines, and 5 cars, most in original railroad colors: the "Eugene Field" (Frisco colors), "Shenandoah" (PRR colors), "Lionel Ives" (PRR colors), "Clover Colony" (built 1920; PRR colors & Pullman lettering), and open platform observation "The Pennsylvania." As we go to press, senatorial candidate S.I. Hayakawa in California was planning a campaign train to run from L.A. to San Diego on Oct 30.

THE HALLOWEEN SCHEDULE BEGINS

As the nation, celebrating Halloween, turns clocks back one hour to Standard Time Oct 31, Amtrak's fall schedules commence, with much-heralded time savings on many routes. The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA gets the most shortened schedule, 2hrs 50mins eastbound and 2hrs westbound, while the EMPIRE BUILDER saves 1hr 45mins each direction, and the INTER-AMERICAN 1hr 10mins. The SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR is shortened 1hr 5mins eastbound despite an added stop at Colfax CA, and 50mins westbound. Other trains have their schedules shortened from 35 to 5 minutes. Most of the major changes were indicated on our system diagram last issue (the Laredo arrival time of train 21 was given in error as 6:15am, when it should be pm). Amtrak has summarized some Eastern changes in an October press release: A new Amfleet train named THE EMBASSY will depart DC for NY Mon-Fri at 5:05pm as a substitution for the MONTREALER that will depart one hour later. Southbound, the EMBASSY leaves NY at 9am. Friday and Sunday-only Metroliners leaving DC at 8pm and NY at 8:30pm will be discontinued, and traffic diverted to Amfleet trains on similar schedules. The NIGHT OWL begins stopping in both directions at Bridgeport CT, and the northbound stop in Aberdeen MD will be changed to 8:18am. The westbound Washington section of the BROADWAY LIMITED will leave DC at 4:05pm, not 3:45. Other times are unchanged, but it will no longer stop at Capital Beltway. A stop at N. Philadelphia will be added on the NY section for passengers going or coming beyond Harrisburg. The LONE STAR will leave Dallas at 3:35pm and arrive there at 3:50pm. The PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL arrives Seattle at 11:30am and leaves at 6pm. The northbound SILVER METEOR/CHAMPION operates 50mins later than it did. The northbound MONTREALER operates one hour later at all points. (See also Mixed Train of Thoughts section for some December changes of Florida trains.)

Rail Canada



ONTARIO NORTHLAND RAILWAYS is acquiring four 4-unit ex-TEE trains from Europe, according to an announcement made in North Bay, Ontario, Oct 9 by James Snow, Ontario minister of transportation and communications. The artist's conception of one of these trains, shown above (courtesy of The North Bay Nugget), illustrates their appearance in ONR paint. The diesel unit-trains are being purchased by the Urban Transportation Development Corp. for $3.7 million from their previous operators, a Swiss-Dutch pool service, and will be leased to ONR for $1 million per year for a 5-year term. Refurbishing of the 15-year old equipment, made obsolete by electrification of some European trackage, is being done in Switzerland. Each train consists of a diesel engine, a 42-seat coach, a diner-lounge (32 diner seats, kitchen, 18 lounge seats), and a 9-compartment car, with each compartment holding 6 passengers. Cars are described as having large picture windows with venetian blinds, and are air conditioned. The trains are to be put into service between Toronto and Northern Ontario points, furnishing two daily roundtrips. The first such TEE-1 train is expected to arrive in April, and the others later in 1977.

ONE RTN READER on a recent trip west to Vancouver on CN's SUPER CONTINENTAL reported that sleeping car passengers were awakened shortly after 6am for the 8:30 arrival, on the pretext that the linen had to be replaced before the car arrived in Vancouver. Other complaints have been heard, including leaving the lights on at night in the remodeled ex-Milwaukee Super Dome cars, making them useless for sightseeing. Nevertheless, patronage remains high on the SUPER runs.

CANADA'S UNION-SPONSORED "Labour Day of Protest", protesting wage controls, shut down a number of transportation systems. The Vancouver B.C. Hydro system did not operate during the morning peak period, while evening rush hours were filled. In Montreal, where bus service was sporadic, there were reports of mobs pulling both passengers and drivers from buses while in service, and subjecting them to beatings. The B.C. Ferries system was totally idled, and many passenger train runs across the Dominion were cancelled. Transit systems in Toronto and Victoria were not affected.

TORONTO TRANSIT AUTHORITY reports that senior officers have been named to supervise the revamping of commuter rail plant and passenger-handling facilities in Toronto's Union Station. Four men will guide a $58 million project, expected to take 5 years, which will allow greatly-expanded numbers of intercity and commute passengers to use the facility in the next several decades. First phase, to start at once, involves improved passenger-handling facilities--widened platforms, altered stairways and passageways, and addition of new stairways and escalators.

THE "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" made its final trips of the season on a charter from Everett, Wash. on Sept 27. It departed Seattle at 4:45am to deadhead to Everett for an 8am sailing to Victoria. On Sept 28 it deadheaded Everett to Victoria. Inside reports indicate perhaps a declining will on the part of Social Credit leaders to replace the ship on the Seattle-Victoria route.

Urban-Suburban Transit

LARRY S. PROVO, the C&NW's Chairman and chief executive officer, died Oct 19 of lung cancer in Chicago at the age of 49.

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY COLEMAN dealt Los Angeles transportation experts a "serious blow" Oct 21 when he surprised them by speaking in highly negative terms of the proposed downtown rail transit starter line that L.A. hopes will be funded 80% by UMTA. While the final decision on funding has not yet been made, it seems likely from Coleman's attitude expressed in a visit to L.A. that he does not approve of the rail portion of the plan, tho he apparently agrees to the bus service improvements and a downtown "people mover." Coleman noted that L.A. voters have turned down two transit funding measures in less than two years, and that the law requires that local areas make some matching fund commitment to be eligible for federal transit money.

BART'S PASSENGER REVENUE was up a substantial 34.4% in August, compared to August 1975, the transit agency reported Oct 28. Average trip length was the same both periods--13 miles--but the average fare rose from 65¢ to 75¢ as a result of a fare increase in Nov 1975. BART officials said that permanent night service, opening of the Embarcadero Station last May, and better car availability and service performance all contributed to the increased revenue. After the fare increase, patronage dropped and then rose to a level 10.8% higher than before. BART said this month that it will offer Saturday service from Nov 20 thru Dec 18, 10am to 6pm.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY in Chicago is offering the C&NW a 4-year purchase-of-service contract for $29.1 million. The C&NW is the largest commuter railroad in Chicago, and the only major one not yet under contract with the RTA.

ONE OF THE worst service breakdowns in the history of Boston's MBTA occurred Oct 5 when a southbound 4-car train between South Station and Broadway suffered a broken front axle. The incident, which happened at 2:13pm, was resolved by busing around the affected area, rather than shutting off power to repair the train in the face of the evening rush hour. It was the second broken axle on a Blue Bird car in less than a month, and the MBTA said it was taking 38--nearly half--the cars out of service to make axle inspections.

THE NEW JERSEY Transportation Commissioner said this month that over $5 million may be available to the state for improvements to its four major rail commuter lines. The money would come from federal emergency operating assistance funds, recently expanded by Congress to apply to rail upgrading projects.

FORMER RAIL COMMUTER line in California's Marin County may be abandoned. The now-freight-only Northwestern Pacific Railroad, an SP subsidiary, is asking the ICC for permission to abandon its San Rafael branch, a 10-mile line between Corte Madera and Ignacio.

A RESTORATION OF streetcars and cobblestones to M Street is a goal officially announced last month by the Citizens Association of Georgetown (2803 M St. N.W., Washington DC 20007). The organization seeks to investigate funding sources, while delaying court-ordered paving and track removal from several Georgetown streets.

SOUTH SHORE LINE'S antique interurban cars will probably run no longer than three more years, reports Mass Transit. The cars, badly rusting, will be patched up by the railroad at a cost of $1 million, and a funding source for new cars is being sought to replace the old. The South Shore owns 48 cars of 1926-7 vintage.

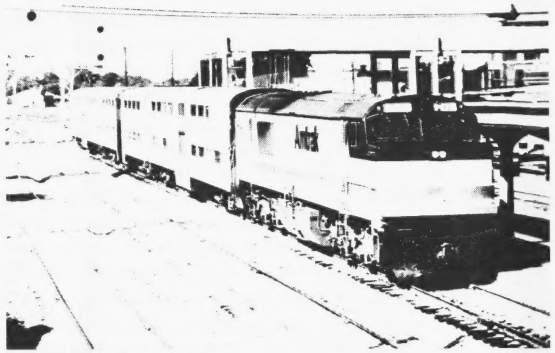
THE ROCK ISLAND'S commuter line will receive RTA assistance. A federal judge this month ordered the railroad and the RTA to sign an agreement for financial aid.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"I didn't know there was a place to eat on the train."

--Elderly woman commenting to fellow passenger as she detrained from the COAST STARLIGHT at San Jose after riding from Los Angeles, Oct 10.

THE ILLINOIS ZEPHYR got Amfleet cars on Oct 14. Consist was P30 engine 724, 4 Amcoaches & an Amlounge. Leaving Chicago the train hit logs placed on the track by vandals, and the engine was damaged. A BN SD-9 towed the train to Galesburg, where passengers were bused to Quincy. They were bused back the next morning, and the train left an hour late behind P30 #706, which was moved out during the night. The train had Amfleet cars for one week in May, then it went back to the usual ex-C&NW bi-level cars. The above photo shows the Amfleeted IZ last May 7, the first such consist, at Galesburg. At right is the train in June with C&NW cars again, behind engine 711. Photos by Harry M. Grossman.



PRAISE FOR PALMETTO: "Truly the most luxurious train I've been on in a long time" says reader Jack Fritz, who sends this photo of himself pouring drinks in Amclub 20675 Oct 2. "These two Amtrak employees made more friends for the company that day with their congeniality than I've observed in a long, long time."

CANDIDATE JIMMY CARTER'S campaign train of Sept 20-21 looked like this as the train left Trenton with Auto-Liner car 101 on the rear. Amtrak photo.

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AMFLEETING THE SAN JOAQUIN

Music is playing on the railroad tracks of California's San Joaquin Valley these days. The source is an 8-track tape deck in the Amdinette car of Amtrak's newly Amfleeted SAN JOAQUIN, and it sends melodies unobtrusively into all the comfortable and handsome 60-seat Amcoaches on what must now be one of North America's nicest trains.

The transformation of this short-distance train began Oct 18 when five brand new Amfleet cars behind two new F40 diesels rolled up to Oakland's 16th Street station to head off toward Bakersfield with a load of press people and railfans (the last two cars were extra, reserved for them), and a small number of paying passengers (see Cars & Consists, p.2). The evening before, the westbound train had come in--a little early, as always--with two ex-SP F units (376 & 377) that were probably running their last passenger run for Amtrak. Behind them were conventional cars 1602 "Silver Salon", lunch counter diner 8117, and coach 6801 (former GN sleeper). Today things were quite different on the eastbound #710. An employee of the Southern Pacific--the Octopus that had fought to rid itself of the SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT --was bidding us welcome to a reborn train. "Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. Welcome aboard Amtrak's Amfleet. This is Paul Heminger, your conductor..." We were close to making a 9:43 Richmond crew stop to pick up the Santa Fe people who would take responsibility for the train beyond Port Chicago.

Elsewhere on board, crew members were preparing to serve plates of canapes and pour champagne for the guests aboard. Later there would be complimentary lunches of airline-style Swiss Steak (and very good!). Amtrak's Arthur Lloyd, head public affairs man of the Western Region, was watching carefully over the proceedings. Bruce Heard, from Washington, who takes special interest in this train that runs thru the streets of his home town, was on hand for this event.

At 10:24, after a P.A. announcement that we would arrive "shortly," the train made its first station stop at Martinez. Soon we were heading for the transition area from SP to ATSF track, and an operation that takes from 10-15 minutes. "This is a Toonerville operation, where it goes from SP to Santa Fe" a veteran railroader was telling a companion. "Isn't that Toonerville?" At Merced, which was reached at 12:43, most of the guests detrained in order to catch #711 about two hours later for the return to the Bay Area. Some stayed aboard for the complete run to Bakersfield and a return on their own.

The return train of the 18th was the last conventional equipment run for the SAN JOAQUIN. As Arthur Lloyd pointed out, it offered a comparison between the old and new. Engine 543 was pulling #711, and the consist, with two extra press cars, was 1601 "Silver Buffet", lunch counter car 8110, 68-seat coaches 6802 and 6800, and lounge 3501. The lounge, before Amtrak the famous parlor car on the DEL MONTE (ex-SP 2982), has been a protection car for most of the trains operating out of L.A. It filled immediately with Amtrak's guests, and remained full until our 5:50 Oakland arrival. The unrefurbished conventional cars did offer an instructive comparison. The Amfleet cars definitely rode better. The comfortable Amdinette car with its eight tables with foam-cushioned bench seats offers a very pleasant way to take in the valley. Sit and listen to the music as you sip a drink, watch drivers battling it out on the highway. The 60-seat Amcoaches offer about as much room as Amclub double-seating sections. The Santa Fe-type legrests come as a surprise. The seats recline farther than those of higher-density Amcoaches. There are "dressing rooms" in addition to unisex bathrooms. Nothing in this world is perfect, and of course there are some things to complain about. One is the fixed armrest in the center of each seat pair. Many prefer the larger windows and higher luggage racks of the old cars. But the new offer enough features novel to this train that they are to be preferred. RTN's Peter Bretz commented: "I'm very much impressed with the whole feeling of the train. It's a lot better than the SAN DIEGAN service." The SAN DIEGANS will be improved soon with the addition of Amlounges, but the point to note is that when an old-car enthusiast like Pete praises new equipment, there has to be something to it.

AMTRAK--THE FUTURE OF A PROVEN CONCEPT

A Condensation of Paul Reistrup's Talk before the American Short Line RR Association Annual Meeting, October 15

Your President, Howard Croft, invited me to talk about "Amtrak's new image." You can't be too careful when you get an invitation like that. What does an old friend mean when he says, "Let's talk about your new image"? Was the OLD image all that bad? Is the NEW image something we should be rather cautious about? I have given that a lot of thought.

I have heard some people say that the railroads or federal policies or both had gotten the passenger business so fouled up that no one could ever get it back on its feet. Maybe that's the old image. Maybe people are expecting Amtrak to come along and recreate the passenger business as it was years ago. I'll have to agree that many people do believe that is Amtrak's charter. As a matter of fact, there are many, many things about the old system that I would like to see again. I would like to see those "Express Train" speeds. I would like to see those dedicated workers both on the trains and off who made railroading what it was. I'd like to see some of those thousands of miles of good track that made passenger travel safe, reliable and comfortable. And I would like to see some of those real old days when passenger traffic was profitable. Of course, the old image was good. I'll agree with those who look back and say it was glorious. But we'll never go back. Things are so much different now. We live in a different world.

Amtrak was created by Congress to become a nationwide rail passenger system and to provide an alternative transportation facility for all the people of this country. Amtrak is here to relieve congestion on the highway, to reduce overcrowding on the airways and airports and to bring balance to a transportation system which has gone too far in one direction...too far toward the automobile. Something has to be done to bring more balance into the system. Something has to be done to offer a more energy-effective means of transportation. The American way of life is based upon automobile transportation. Congress has come along and said that the American way of life should be based upon plentiful

transportation, but not all on automobiles. This is important.

There is a recent report by the Federal Task Force on Motor Vehicle Goals Beyond 1980 which is dated Sept. 2, 1976. The Secretary of Transportation was requested to lead this joint federal task force to recommend these goals. On the very first page this report says, "The automobile is the most flexible and responsive transportation mode and is used for 90% of all personal travel."

During that same month (Sept. 1976) Secretary Coleman was quoted by the UPI as saying, "To say you have a national policy where you have a coast-to-coast rail passenger service just doesn't made sense when you don't have money for other needs which are greater."

On the face of it, these two positions are in conflict. No nation should permit its transportation policy to be so unbalanced that it has 90% of personal travel by one mode, which by the way is the biggest consumer of energy, when only 4.3% of all personal travel is performed in the two most energy-efficient modes--bus and rail. We have gone beyond the point where we can overlook this threat to our national well being. We cannot ignore this. We must deal directly with bringing about a more logical balance. I don't want to make a case for "balance" alone, but the threat to this nation comes from the fact that automobiles and airplanes, combining 96% of all personal travel, are so wasteful of our energy resources and buses and trains are not. Now! Amtrak is not trying to de-invent the auto or the plane, but we all know that this situation cannot be ignored forever.

For this reason, I say that Amtrak is here, not because service went to pot and "no one could play centerfield." Rather, Amtrak is here for a much bigger, and a much more important purpose: to provide an important transportation alternative.

Actually there is a big difference between what we are trying to do and what all the railroads used to do. Remember there was a time when Robert R. Young, President of the New York Central, used to say, "A hog can travel across the country without changing trains but you can't." This is part of the distinction. The great days of passenger service were the great days of individual railroads. Each road had its own routes and its own traditions, but there was no single nationwide network. No superior, single company stood at the top of the heap and ran the whole thing. Perhaps in that day there was no need for a single, integrated system. Today there is.

It is a completely different thing to provide rail transportation on a nationwide basis. For example, you do not limit yourself to selling a train. You sell a system! Amtrak sells the train today because we have no alternative. We sell the BROADWAY, the PANAMA LIMITED, and the SILVER METEOR; but this does not mean that we are always going to do this. Let's take an example.

We sell a fine train, the EMPIRE BUILDER; it pulls out of Chicago and two days and 2287 miles later it arrives in Seattle. It runs along the open expanse of our northern border, and it is a popular train. All summer long it does good business, and some hunting and ski traffic keeps it doing fairly well in the winter. But does this train perform the job which Congress had in mind when it mandated that Amtrak provide a more balanced transportation service? I would say "No" to that.

Only about 4% of the people who take this train stay on it from beginning to end. This means that more than 96% of its riders are intermediate distance riders. That is the big market, and this is where our riders come from --in between the end points. This is true in essentially the same proportion for most of our long-distance trains. This tells us something.

The bulk of our market is made up of those people who live along the route of the train and who use that train because it is there. We need to analyze this. If a person in Fargo wants to go to Grand Forks, less than 100 miles, he must get on the train at 3:25am, and he gets off at 5:05am. Right there we see a problem. Those are bad hours. Furthermore, he has to get back to Fargo. He can get a train late that night at 11:40 and he will be in Fargo at 1:30am. But that means two nights without much sleep, or a longer stay at the mid-point.

In other words, we run a nice train, but because it is the only one each day, we are able to reach and to satisfy only a very limited market. The traveler has no choice. In fact, there are very few routes which we operate where we have any realistic hope whatsoever of tapping the intermediate round trip market. And when you have said that, you have said that we have very little hope of reaching the biggest market there is. This is a most important conclusion, not because it is an absolute stone wall, but because it tells us how much more we must do to get on with the job. Our job is to develop a national transportation system with frequent and convenient schedules.

As we are running most of our long-distance trains, they are something like a Disneyworld attraction. We more or less say to the traveler, "Here is a fine train. Come ride with us." If he has the time, the money, and if he wants to go where we are going, at the time we are going, we may have a deal. This does business. Disneyworld does business, but this is not what Congress demands of us. This is not a nationwide passenger service.

But everything has to begin somewhere. The basic system Amtrak inherited and the rolling stock which Amtrak acquired have permitted the operation of a huge system which might have collapsed otherwise. Now we must continue to build upon that. This will take a lot of work, a lot of vision, and a lot of money. Perhaps the most interesting of these three is the one called "vision." Or as Howard Croft said, "image." In railroading as in any other pursuit, you cannot be more than you aspire to be.

There is a vague law, sometimes called Clarke's Law, which states, "When a distinguished but elderly scientist says that something is possible, he is almost certainly right. When he says that something is impossible, he is almost certainly wrong."

It must have been Clarke's Law which I heard when I first thought about the challenge of coming to Amtrak. There were a lot of "elderly scientists" all around the industry who were saying that Amtrak was impossible and that rail passenger service in the U.S. had already died away. I heard them. Most of us have heard them before, but I am here today--after being with Amtrak for more than 18 months--to say that they were wrong. Amtrak is not impossible, and I can assure you with some authority and with a lot of personal enthusiasm that Amtrak is going to become a success and that success will come about because Amtrak is going to be something rail passenger service never was: a truly nati-

onwide transportation system!

The pendulum has begun to swing in that direction. It took time and hard work to bring the decline around. We have turned around the decline in ridership. We have turned around the decline in revenue production and I can report to you today that when our new timetables are published at the end of this month we are, for the first time since we began, going to see a reduction in the elapsed time on many significant segments of Amtrak's routes. This is a most important achievement and one which signals a gain of major proportions brought about by the cooperative effort of all of the railroads which work with us. This is something which we are unable to do for ourselves or by ourselves.

Other things of great importance are happening. In the Northeast Corridor we have been running a locomotive which we leased from ASEA in Sweden. This lightweight powerhouse has completed its test and certification runs at 120mph without a hitch. Known as the ASEA-Rc4a, it weighs about 90 tons and it delivers 6000 horsepower. It is thyristor controlled for the smooth application of power. It has proved itself in Europe as a reliable and steady performer. We have a good substantial fleet of new locomotives, but we need to go beyond what we find here in the U.S. to meet requirements which are already beginning to grow in the Northeast Corridor. A new French-built locomotive will join the ASEA locomotive in December and we shall have the benefit of two proven technologies. We must move ahead and this is one way it can be done.

Many of you know me. I have been around railroads most of my mature life. I have been in the passenger end of the business and I have been in the freight business. I am one of those people who can recall being taken by his father to the yards to watch the engines working, to hear steam hissing and to feel the quickened beat of the heart when heavy equipment strains and the ground shakes. I am one of those who had to set up a great train for its last trip. When I had to send the famous B&O ROYAL BLUE down the tracks for its last majestic trip, you didn't find me down there watching that gallant train pull out for the last time. That's an emotional tug which gets us all. Jervis Langdon directed me to try to make a go of it on the B&O and I gave it everything I had. Then when we had to ac-

cept that it was not going to work, I was just as glad to pack it all up. After all, that was a business decision and I hadn't wanted to put hard won money down that hole any more than the next guy. But those were different days and that was for another cause.

Today...Amtrak is different. We are running a great railroad, but it is an entirely different railroad from what they used to be. We are national and we are being paid for, to a great extent, by the American people. This distinction is important. I like to get among men who know and understand this business and then lay it all out on the table. We all need to understand the Amtrak concept.

From the very beginning, Amtrak was created to hold the franchise. Can you imagine what it might have cost the American people if all rail passenger service had ceased back there in 1971 and then some time later we found that we had to rebuild the system? Congress directed the Secretary of Transportation to come up with the basic system. The Secretary selected the 21 end-point cities and the Amtrak incorporators studied those end-points and the routes in between and came up withthe present system. On the day Amtrak was born, more than one-half of the then-existing rail passenger service in the country faded away and all that was left was this country's passenger train hobby set. We had about 23,000 miles of routes and fewer than 2000 old cars with which to begin to provide nationwide service. Right there something was wrong.

The unit of transportation is not the train. The unit of transportation is the passenger. Anyone in this country should be able to step out of his office, or his front door, and have a choice of transportation to any distination he chooses. Passenger trains need to become part of that system. Right now,all of the people in this country are paying for the Amtrak system but all too few of them have convenient access to it, sometimes even when it passes right thru their own home town. Because this is the fundamental requirement, this is what Amtrak must achieve. This is the real story of Amtrak.

Our basic system is reasonably static and shall remain so for a while. We shall do everything we can to increase service on that system and particularly to pick up speed there, but that much is in hand. It is our foundation stone.

Next we are moving to develop the Northeast Corridor. Here we have a major population area and a good piece of real estate from Washington to Boston. This will be developed during the next few years with emphasis on the track until it has become one of the finest inter-city corridor routes in the world. We are already looking at equipment which we may be able to use there and which will improve upon the Metroliners which have set high standards and have built a "Premium" fare clientele which is ready to support improvements.

The full extension and electrification of the corridor to Boston will have a big impact upon revenues by adding that northern sector leverage to the original New York-Washington route. As soon thereafter as is possible, we shall tie in the Harrisburg spur and the Springfield spur to the corridor. With new trains running on half-hour frequencies at peak times and running up to 125mph, the corridor will do good business. It stands to reason that it will have to be extended south to Richmond not only to pick up that metropolitan area but to include in the corridor the huge population south of Washington DC which now must fight their way into town if they plan to take the train. Enlarging the corridor to Richmond brings up the corollary question, "Why not swing easterly and pick up Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News and Hampton--the fastest growing metropolitan area on the eastern seaboard?"

The corridor concept has a way of growing by itself. I have just come back from Japan, where I made an intensive study of the Shinkansen. Those "BulletTrains" began as a 300 mile link between Tokyo and Osaka. Then they were extended another hundred miles or so to Okayama and finally all the way to Hakata at the south end of Kyushu. Now that single 620 mile operation carries as many as 1,000,000 passengers on peak days. The success of the Shinkansen has called for more development and the longest undersea tunnel in the world is being dug to connect the Shinkansen to the northern island of Hokkaido. Eventually the Shinkansen will be a nationwide system of about 4500 miles, all operating at over 125mph in the same kind of trains on high-speed track.

I find it interesting and especially challenging to discover that the locale which has been chosen for the resurgence of the new rail passenger system is the Northeast Corridor. It was there that the Morgans built their first railroad lines, and then battled the entrenched steamboats for the lucrative New York to New Haven, gateway to New England, traffic. It was there that the unbeatable triumvirate of the automobile, the Merritt Parkway and Bob Moses, overwhelmed the railroads. And it is right there again that Amtrak is going to drive the Northeast Corridor thru to success to create a pattern which will be repeated throughout the country. There is always a right time for change and there is always the right place for change. The NortheastCorridor right now is both the right time and the right place. We are going to make it work, and we are going to win the war on a tradition-scarred battleground.

We fully expect to find that the success of the Northeast Corridor will not be lost on the rest of the country and that the many emerging corridors throughout the country, from such places as San Diego to Los Angeles, Portland to Seattle, Houston to Dallas/Ft. Worth and the whole Chicago area, will be developed similarly. And as they get into operation, it can be expected that they too will be extended and lengthened.

Thus, the corridor expansion will have the effect of making the longer basic routes appear to be no more than links between corridors. This will reduce their cost and fit them into their proper niche in the overall nationwide system. At that point we shall find that the original basic system of 1971 will finally have proven its worth and it will have been fitted back into the whole plan as the vital infrastructure for a healthy national system of fully integrated corridors. At that time Amtrak will have become what it set out to be--a nationwide transportation system. Our immediate goal will have been achieved.

I know many of you too well to expect that you have bought all of this exactly as I have painted this picture. On traditional grounds I know what you are thinking and I must admit these thoughts occur to me also. There are bound to be big obstacles. One of these is money and the other is track. As for money, I am more sanguine than I used to be. I know it will cost a lot of money but when we recall that the Interstate Highway Program began with a plan for $27 billion and has grown to where it is going to cost $80 billion before it is completed, I know the

government will not shy away from the modest amount the Amtrak plan will require.

Money is always a problem, but the problem becomes "thinkable" when it can be related to things close to home. A recent survey shows that the average cost of ONE MILE of urban thoroughfare acquisition and construction today anywhere in the U.S. is $100 million. To relate this to Amtrak, the Federal Government had invested in the form of Federal operating grants $817 million in Amtrak from May 1, 1971 thru Dec. 31, 1975. That investment in Amtrak over its first 4½ years was the equivalent of about EIGHT MILES of bumper to bumper roadway. Congress understands these figures and Congress will go along with us as long as we show that the corridor by corridor "step ladder" process is the right way to go.

With track we have another problem. We can see the development and improvement of the Northeast Corridor because Amtrak owns that property and because the government has put up the money. But there is another problem. Are we going to operate that route after it has been rebuilt and designed for high-speed passenger service, for both passenger trains and freight trains? This presents a real hard-rock problem. Because of the physical and engineering problems which confront the decision makers on this, it will be a tough one to solve. We all know the mix is undesirable and probably incompatible at the speeds Amtrak must have.

It is interesting to note that when the Japanese first planned the Bullet Train route, they planned to operate 80 fast passenger trains and 10 freight trains each day. Before they got into operation, the freight trains had been eliminated from the plan.

It may be that we shall have to look at that too. It may be that we can live with the freight, at least for a while, but if we do it may be necessary to put some weight, length of train, and height of center-of-gravity restrictions on freight operations. There is just too much cargo originating and terminating in the corridor to rule it out altogether. We will have to let things go for a while and then we may have to turn to Congress and see what they believe the government can afford to carry. With both services in the corridor, daily operational and maintenance costs are going to be higher.

So much for the Northeast Corridor; what about others? In many instances there ought

to be enough right of way to permit the acquisition of trackage and property from one railroad or another to permit the development of a similar high-speed corridor system. Each one will have to be punched thru depending on problems in each area. By the time we have to confront this problem, we may have a better fix on the solution to the joint freight and passenger train problem. Because the laws of physics and the principles of engineering do not lend themselves to compromise or to avoidance, something is going to have to be done. I am sure that we can find out what to do and ways to do it.

In my nearly two years at Amtrak, I have found that we are able to make progress in spite of problems which sound impossible. I believe in Clarke's Law: If we believe something is possible, it can be done! We can work all of this out. The principle reason why I believe this is because we are doing this for the good of all of the people of this country. That simple and direct reason has a lot of clout.

Meanwhile, I have seen a lot of improvement on the railroads. I said earlier that we are going to be able to reduce elapsed time on some of our schedules this fall. We are not getting all of that from speed. We are saving it in little things here and there. But much of the improvement does come from speed and that is significant.

I believe that the railroads of this country are closer than they have been for some time to the realization that track problems are not all maintenance problems. Many track problems have been brought about by the uncontrolled utilization of cars which are too heavy, by the operation of trains which are too long, and by the use of cars on which the center of gravity is too high. The old steel wheel on the steel rail has limits and we may have roughed our way thru until we have sensed an approach to those limits. Many companies are finding that shorter trains with lighter cars running at higher speeds make money. This of course is the way back. The more excellent, high speed track there is for freight, the more utilization, comfort and safety there is going to be for passenger service. We are working this out together and I have enough faith in the grand old railroad industry to believe that we are going to accomplish our ends to our mutual satisfaction without the eclipse or elimination of one of us or the other. The future of American railroads is going to be good for all of us and for the American people.

THE MANUFACTURE OF AMTRAK'S BI-LEVEL PASSENGER CAR

Summary of a recent talk by a Pullman-Standard representative at the Car Dept. Officers Association 1976 Convention

The Amtrak bi-level production is advancing quickly, and one car is currently undergoing ride quality testing. There has been talk of standardization in the railroad equipment industry for several years. Just as the PCC streetcar was a hallmark in light rail standardization, the bi-level will prove to be a standard long-distance car.

The bi-level coach seats 71 passengers; the coach baggage car seats passengers on the upper level only for a total of 60. The seating is removable and is secured to the floor by aircraft-type seat tracks, permitting the spacing to be changed, and allows for the installation of a lounge or bar area. The lower level of bi-level coaches seats 11 people, including one oversized seat for handicapped passengers. On the lower level are 5 unisex toilets and one toilet for handicapped people. Head room on either level is 6'7".

The dining car will seat 78 people on the upper level, with the kitchen area below.

The sleeping car has undergone many changes which resolved into the following configuration: on the upper level are five first class rooms with private toilet facilities, and also 10 economy rooms to accommodate 20 passengers. On the lower level are 3 distinct room types. There are 4 economy rooms, one family room and one handicap room. The latter contains special bathroom facilities with special assist hardware, etc. for handicapped people. The general dimensions of the car closely resemble those of the Santa Fe EL CAPITAN cars, except for the weight and overall height. P-S proposed several room arrangements. One of them allows two first class rooms to be made into one double room by sliding the dividing partition into a recess between the two toilet facilities. The economy room arrangement allows one person in the compartment to sleep in the upper bunk while the seat is used in the lower area. When the seats are lowered, the porter places a mattress on top of the cushions to make up the bed. This mattress is stowed in the upper bunk.

The family room will easily accommodate 4 people, and if necessary some seats also collapse into a bunk for a fifth.

Discharge from all toilets is vacuum pumped into a sewage collection system in an equipment compartment on the "A" end. All sewage is macerated into a liquid-like consistency and discharged to the track when the train speed is above 25mph. The system is designed to treat sewage by chlorination, which results in a total bacteria kill. Careful attention has been paid to insure that any kind of foreign matter dropped into a toilet can be handled without fouling the sewage treatment package.

Each car has a maximum water capacity of 580 gallons, including 2 250-gallon portable water tanks and an 80-gallon hot water heater.

The "B" end of the car contains air conditioning, etc. The Environmental Package is designed to maintain interior car temperatures in a range of 72 to 75° with exterior ambient temperatures of -18 to 105°. The Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system consists of two 10-ton package A/C and heating units, with one located in each equipment compartment, plus baseboard strip heaters providing connective heat thru the window masks. The A/C packages are designed for quick removal and replacement for maintenance. An HVAC monitoring station is included in the electrical locker of each car.

Each coach seat will have access to an individual convenience system which includes an on-board program selector, a reading light, and an attendant call switch.

The cars are trainlined for 480V 3-phase AC headend power from the locomotive. Four Exane insulated trainlines can carry 1600 amps, enough power for 12-15 cars. Additionally, 4 conduits carry 39 control trainlines from the locomotive for such things as the P.A., battery, brakes, attendant call, indicators, and the surveillance system.

Amtrak is now considering a single-level sleeper. The roof and upper side frames of the bi-level module can be utilized in construction of a single-level car, thereby retaining tooling already developed.

EDITORS GET BRIEFED ON PASSENGER SERVICE

by Peter Roehm

September 22-24 marked the annual conference of the Association of Railroad Editors in Boston. To be discussed in the three days were such diverse subjects as National Transportation Policy, ConRail & the N.E. Connection, and Intercity Passenger Service --Where Is It Going? I caught the last in depth and the rest as time allowed.

Panelists on passenger service were Paul Reistrup (Amtrak), Charles Webb (NAMBO), Oren Beaty (NARP), and Richard Briggs (AAR Public Affairs). Reistrup opened with optimistic comment on bus-rail intermodalism. He said that rails had 1% (20 million) and buses 2% (40-45 million) of the intercity market, and if a fuel shortage returns and there is a one-in-three trip switch to rail and bus from autos, that the public transport sector would receive a 10-fold increase and be totally incapable of coping with it. Thus rails and buses must work toward common goals. Questioned about the Washington-Maine rail-bus connection's success, he said figures would be available after the first full 3 months of operation. (Privately, word has been that less than 100 used the service in July, and that there is not that much cooperation in Maine communities where a bus station agent would be expected to sell a bus-rail interline ticket, but chooses to route all bus instead.) Reistrup also said that unless the bus industry does its half of the job on north-south routes in the West, Amtrak will be called upon by Congressional pressure to operate new routes there that would be clearly uneconomical and bring taxpayer response of one sort or another. He said there would be greater effort made to integrate Amtrak service with local transit systems. He mentioned that the Tidewater service was four times its ridership of the past since the New York connection was begun, and said that some present poor routes require only restructuring rather than outright abandonment, to make them justified economically.

Further notes from Reistrup's talk included that the food sales volume is up on the Amcafes; that the L.A.-San Diego service is up 60%, and that base fares would rise in late 1976 and again in summer 1977. There's been some diversion of Metroliner riders to Amfleet trains, with Metroliner ridership down 5%. I inquired about Amtrak's plans for commuter service in the Corridor, and Reistrup replied that Amtrak would not be involved, that ConRail and/or the public agencies would be responsible for operations and crews, altho Amtrak would be involved in some equipment maintenance where convenient to both.

NAMBO's Webb was not all that favorable to Amtrak, altho he made it clear that the bus industry was not out to destroy Amtrak (really!). He directed his comment in the direction of Amtrak's sugar daddy in the Congress and several times emphasized the need for an equality of competitive opportunity, which was nothing more than providing a euphemism for Amtrak's subsidies, depressed fares, and other dislikes of the bus industry. He said that buses do pay their taxes and that because they do, there should be strong economic considerations made when new Amtrak routes are being developed. He felt that the ICC regulations on adequacy of service came out better for Amtrak than for buses, and that before any were put into effect there should be cost-benefit analyses made. I talked with him later and felt that he is not all that positive toward intermodal concepts, altho he recognizes the idea is here to stay. He seemed less than enthusiastic about north-south bus cooperation in the West.

Briggs, VP of Economics and Public Affairs at AAR, surprised many with his pro-Amtrak/passenger service stance. He spoke of the importance of placing Amtrak's deficit in its proper context--that Amtrak came into being just as double-digit inflation was becoming a way of life; that the AAR index of spot prices for materials and fuel went from 114.6% in 1971 to 204.4% in 1976, and this is faster than almost any business could hope to recover thru price increases (as the airlines know well). With Amtrak, a national recession finds the market generally inelastic, thus price increases yield little or no net increase in income as higher fares discourage riders.

Briggs's view of Amtrak is one of a joint government-industry solution to a national transportation problem and not an experiment in nationalization, as many contend. Unlike Amtrak, the previous railroad operators had neither a national policy

on a basic network nor did they have rate and route flexibility, nor a Congress to appropriate capital and operating funds. Regarding Amtrak's deficits, he said that public investment decisions can legitimately include factors that a corporate board of directors cannot justify considering--altho the Long Island RR under state ownership is losing $125 million annually, it is saving the public even larger sums by not adding to highway capacity and by lowering pollution along with energy consumption, and thus there is justification for the loss--the LIRR is a better investment even at such a deficit. He carried this reasoning over to Amtrak, saying that some deficit routes can look rather good if the equation includes the costs of urban sprawl, land costs and lost property taxes, added energy consumption, and other social costs. Thus if in the end Amtrak even at a loss is costing less than the alternatives, it makes good public policy; in fact, the bottom line concept of the modern corporation is just too limited in its outlook and measurement.

NARP's Beaty was very supportive of Reistrup, but quite critical of the DOT and its outside sources of so-called expertise in transportation. He feared for rail passenger service if Coleman gets another four years at DOT.

A COMPARISON OF AMTRAK PASSENGER CARS

TYPE OF EQUIPMENT	SPEED, MPH	WEIGHT, TONS	POWER TYPE	POWER HEAT	POWER A/C	SEATING 1st CLASS	SEATING REGULAR	SEATING NON-REVENUE	SERVICE LIMIT MEALS/HR.	SERVICE LIMIT SNACKS/HR.
CONVENTIONAL CARS:										
Low-level coach	100	62	axle-driven generator	S	DEM		44-52			
Low-level sleeper	100	73	axle-driven generator	S	DEM	22				
Low-level lounge	100	65	axle-driven generator	S	DEM			20-30		60
Low-level diner	100	65	axle-driven generator	S	DEM			48	48	
Hi-level coach	100	80	diesel generator	S	AEM		72			
Hi-level diner	100	97	diesel generator	S	AEM			68	68	
AMFLEET CARS:										
coach	120	52	head-end power	E	AEM		84			
cafe	120	55	head-end power	E	AEM		60			130
club	120	55	head-end power	E	AEM	18	28		30	80
dinette	120	55	head-end power	E	AEM		28	32	64	
BI-LEVEL CARS:										
coach	100	76	head-end power	E	AEM		77			
lounge	100	79	head-end power	E	AEM			72		100
sleeper	100	77	head-end power	E	AEM	12	31			
diner	100	95	head-end power	E	AEM			72	85	
ROHR TURBOLINERS:										
power coach	125	76	head-end power	E	AEM		40			
power club	125	76	head-end power	E	AEM	27			27	
coach	125	52	head-end power	E	AEM		72			
snack coach	125	55	head-end power	E	AEM		52			130
METROLINERS:										
coach	130	84	catenary elec. power	E	AEM		76			
cafe	130	84	catenary elec. power	E	AEM		60			
club	130	84	catenary elec. power	E	AEM	34			34	

Abbreviations: S - steam; E - electric; DEM - DC electro-mechanical; AEM - AC electro-mechanical. Table courtesy of Amtrak.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

RTN HAS LEARNED that for the winter season, starting Dec 15, Amtrak's SILVER METEOR and CHAMPION will again run as separate trains, but for the first time under Amtrak they will follow different routes in the Carolinas. The METEOR will follow the Florence-Charleston route (with the PALMETTO), and the CHAMPION will follow the Hamlet-Raleigh route (with the SILVER STAR). This will put two trains on each Carolina route. Train 87-88 becomes 83-84 (METEOR) and 85-86 (CHAMPION). Trains 85 & 86 lv St. Pete at 7am, ar NY 9:25am; lv NY 4:20pm, ar St. Pete 6:40pm. Trains 83 & 84 lv Miami 10:15am, ar NY 11:50am; lv NY 3:50pm, ar Miami 5:25pm..... THE ANN RUTLEDGE, Amtrak train 301, on Sept 16 demolished an auto that reportedly ignored flashing signals at Allen St. crossing in Bloomington IL and drove onto the tracks head on into the approaching train. The train, with engine 508 pulling, was traveling at 25mph. The car was occupied only by the driver, who was killed..... THE INAUGURAL RUN of the new SHENANDOAH was changed at the last minute to Oct 29 and 30, the inaugural train running Washington-Parkersburg the first day and Parkersburg-Cincy the second, with revenue service beginning Oct 31. We expect to have a full story next issue..... THE FIRST ADS for the Amfleeted SAN JOAQUIN we've seen appeared in newspapers here Oct 27, with the announcement of a special roundtrip promotion: a 4-day special roundtrip excursion for $3 more than the one-way fare. The ad carried an illustration similar to our 1st Sept cover, but with an unnumbered SDP40F engine hauling the train..... THE CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR dome lounge sleeper observations, along with "Wingate Brook", have begun appearing on the SUNSET LIMITED, and reader Warren Schulingkamp reports seeing car 9253 ("Silver Lookout") on train 1 at Houston on Oct 13. These cars have been in Houston before, having run on the LONE STAR until about Jan 1975. The "Wingate Brook" is being brought up to our home base for a run on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR out of Oakland Oct 31, at the end of an 18-car consist (including two F units at the front) to furnish cars for a special train for the Colfax Chamber of Commerce that date which will return from Reno to Colfax and Sacramento the evening of Oct 31..... THE RIO GRANDE announced Oct 20 that first class accommodations on the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR will be discontinued effective Nov 18. Three bedrooms and one drawing room in car 10 ("Silver Sky") will be removed to enlarge lounge seating. The railroad is repairing the roof of its elderly (1906) Glenwood Springs CO depot, using many of the original red tiles. The railroad's parent company reported earnings up 26% for the first 9 months of 1976, compared to the 1975 period. Colorado courts may soon hear a challenge to the structure of the Moffat Tunnel Commission. The Commission, which owns and leases the tunnel to Rio Grande, is composed of commissioners voted for by proprty owners. Challengers want all eligible registered voters to be able to vote for commissioners..... THE FATE OF the ADIRONDACK is the concern of a reader who asks why the train doesn't stop at Port Kent, NY, as the D&H used to. A stop there would tie the train in with Burlington VT and the rest of Northwestern Vermont. Port Kent is the west shore terminal for the Lake Champlain ferries to and from Burlington. The D&H is adjacent to the ferry dock in Port Kent. When seen in August there were 3 ferries shuttling back and forth constantly. The Burlington ferry slip is adjacent to Union Station, site of the now-defunct Vermont Steam Train boarding point. There is no bridge within many miles, so the ferry-train connection would be useful. Port Kent seems to have no bus service.....

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READER R. L. EASTWOOD JR., President of the Philadelphia Chapter NRHS, writes: "As Co-Chairman of the 1976 NRHS Convention, I was interested in your report on Amtrak President Paul Reistrup's speech to the Convention here Sept 4 (2nd Sept issue). Ken Maylath mentioned in his report that Mr. Reistrup returned to Washington on the MERCHANTS LIMITED. But I don't believe that Ken was aware of an

item that is a true indication of the dedication and thoroughness that this man devotes to his career. He rode three different trains between Washington and Philadelphia on his way to the banquet in order that he might maintain close contact with daily operations. We were left with a high degree of confidence in this man and his outlook for Amtrak's future. It is our job to do all we can to promote the success of Amtrak and develop increased ridership"..... A SEASON'S WORK has been lost in upgrading the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak President Reistrup told a New York Times reporter this month (NYT, Oct 10), and he blamed it on the Coleman-DOT bickering and resistance to letting Amtrak take over the Corridor tracks (A loss of a work season was already being feared when we visited Washington last March--see RTN, 2nd March issue). Reistrup told the Times, "I'm going to blow my main circuit breaker with furious outbursts if they don't begin work next spring with gusto." Extra effort will be needed to finish the project by the 1981 deadline..... NEWARK'S PENN STATION will get a rehabilitation job starting in November, when the FRA hires an architectural firm to start design work on the station, which has been called the most neglected major station in the Northeast Corridor...

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AUTO-TRAIN ANNOUNCES deluxe sitdown dining on its East Coast run starting Nov 1. In full-page newspaper ads that compare the service to the TWENTIETH CENTURY LTD., Auto-Train gives sample menus: Salade du jour; choice of Coq au Vin with Noodles, Pot Roast with Potato Pancakes, or Shrimp Curry with Rice; Strawberry Tart, Sacher Torte or Dessert Compote of Fruit; and coffee. Auto-Train described the new dining service this way: "As you enter the dining room, you'll be greeted and seated by a host or hostess. There's new carpeting and new wall coverings, in rich tones of blue and tweed and deep brown and silver. There are touches of mirrored glass and subdued lighting. It's all very lush. On your table you'll find linen table cloths and napkins, English glass for your water and wine and sculptured china. There'll be fresh flowers or a plant on every table. And candles." Complimentary continental breakfast will include Florida fruit juice, French Brioches and Croissants, cheese and fruit Danish pastries.....

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AMTRAK'S BI-LEVEL CARS will be placed on the EMPIRE BUILDER, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, PANAMA LIMITED, and FLORIDIAN in that order, according to information from an interview with Paul Reistrup in the current Passenger Train Journal. The SOUTHWEST LIMITED will keep its present hi-level cars. However, Amtrak said these decisions are subject to change; the information in the interview is about two months old, and doubtless there will be more changes of decisions by the time the new cars arrive. Our Peter Bretz gleaned some details on the sleeper construction late in October from a Washington Amtrak man who had just toured Pullman-Standard. The cars are still just shells, but from a mockup of a sleeper (which is still subject to change) it was learned that economy rooms are similar to the old Pullman sections, with two facing seats for daytime which fold down into a lower for night; the upper folds down from the wall above the window (the windows are very large compared to the present ones). A single passenger buying the space would get this type of room, but not be charged for the second bed; there are no roomettes. Rooms have a glass door with an inside curtain. With curtains open on each side of the aisle, a passenger has an unobstructed view out both sides of the train. These economy rooms, on both levels, have no toilet or wash basin; there are 5 separate bathrooms downstairs, and upstairs economy passengers will have to descend to reach them. There is also a family room downstairs. First class bedrooms, upstairs, will probably have both bath and shower in each. Each will run across the full car width, with access from below, where the aisle will be. All rooms have built-in music-P.A. systems with automatic shutoffs when the door is opened. Amtrak's Board of Directors met in Chicago this month (Oct 27) presumably to tour the Pullman-Standard plant there..... AMTRAK IS ISSUING a new nationwide timetable for the Oct 31 schedule changes..... AMTRAK'S SUNNYSIDE YARD is having its capacity increased from 35 to 40 tracks; five of them were removed in the 1960's.....

PRESIDENT FORD SIGNED, at the eleventh hour before a pocket veto would have occurred, the railroad funding bill which includes Amtrak's appropriation for the fiscal years 1977 and 1978..... THE OHIO ASSOCIATION of RR Psgrs is urging opposition to Amtrak plans to close its station ticket offices in Columbus and Dayton during daytime hours..... AMTRAK PACKAGE EXPRESS gets a holiday special Nov 10-Dec 10: a "Santexpress" rate of a flat $5 on large packages to any city from the following stations: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles..... SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION Coleman has issued a progress report on implementation of his 1975 national transportation policy statement. It could have been written by an oil corporation or auto maker, and demonstrates again the lack of understanding or downright hostility in the DOT toward all forms of personal travel by rail, and even worse, a totally unrealistic view of the nation's energy conservation and environmental conservation needs. "Reducing costs" and "trimming back" just about sum up the attitude toward passenger and commuter rail transport.....

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THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION in its current newsletter calls for the rejection of Amfleet-type cars for long distance Eastern trains (where bi-levels can't be used due to clearance problems). Why should Metroliner-type cars be used for non-Metroliner-type routes and services? asks NARP, complaining about the small Amfleet windows and the low, curving roofs (it's the extreme curvature that makes large windows impractical). Let's not leave the decision on new low-level cars up to "middle-level Amtrak design or finance or marketing employees", warns NARP. Note in the talk by the Pullman-Standard man (p.13) that a pitch is made for building single-level cars using the upper half of the bi-level car frames..... A HORRIBLE ACCIDENT on Mexican National Railways' Chihuahua-Pacific line on Oct 10 saw a westbound excursion train composed of two domed diesel rail cars collide with a stationary freight outside a tunnel in the Sierra Madre Mountains 10 miles south of Creel. The engineer reportedly ignored a stop signal and struck the freight, sending one of the rail cars about 50 feel off a steep embankment. About 17 people, including 2 Americans and 2 Britons, were killed, and about 60 injured..... A REPORT ON Auto-Train in Business Week (Nov 1) indicates that the corporation is limiting its trains to 42 cars, as longer ones were overloading the wheels in braking, and contributing to wheel breakage that caused its derailments. The company is interested in the Chicago-Denver and San Diego-Seattle routes. The Chattanooga Choo-Choo's auto-ferry service, mentioned last issue, will be opposedby Auto-Train. B. Allen Casey Jr. is chairman of thenew company, called Auto-Ferry Inc..... MILES AND KILOMETERS will both be used for the first time in Amtrak's Oct 31 systemwide timetable..... COOK CONTINENTAL TIMETABLE for November contains winter services on Continental railways from Sept 26-Apr 2. Cook says the report of the ORIENT EXPRESS's termination is incorrect: "the service to be withdrawn from May 21, 1977 is the Trieste-Beograd (or Venezia-Beograd) sector of the DIRECT-ORIENT EXPRESS, which carries thru cars from Paris to Athens & Istanbul." After May 21, travelers can either travel via Munchen or take the SIMPLON EXPRESS to Beograd and stay overnight, continuing to Greece or Turkey next morning. A new, simplified TEE network map has been added to the timetable, plus a table of airport rail links. Two of Europe's fastest trains on the Paris-Bordeaux run have been speeded up by 10 minutes this fall, and run at an average speed of 94mph..... CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR James Mills won a great auto-train race from L.A. to San Diego this month by about 5 minutes, taking an Amfleet train and then a bicycle to city hall, while his opponent labored thru freeway traffic..... THE BALTIMORE TUNNEL that tied up the Corridor Sept 18-19 was again the scene of a southbound ConRail freight derailment for 2 hrs Oct 11, and trains 115, 117 (with ASEA engine), 119, 120, 132, BROADWAY LIMITED, MERCHANTS LIMITED,MONTREALER, and a ConRail commuter were all tied up at the scene..... AMTRAK SWITCHERS, CABOOSES, and freight cars are reported popping up all over the Corridor these days..... SCL RAILROAD BRIDGE at Ft. Lauderdale got locked open Oct 11, and the northbd SILVER STAR was detoured on FEC but derailed slightly at Riviera Beach, and riders were bused. Southbd METEOR passengers were

page 18 also bused around the derailment scene.....

Express Ads

RAIL FANS ONLY! It's easy to secure your AMTRAK & CN reservations and tickets (or USA Rail Pass)--from anywhere in the world. Tickets by mail from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105, or call (415) 398-2994.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, Pullman, stationery, rules, metal items from 25 railroads. Long stamped envelope for list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. (Will buy large and small railroad collections.)

Avoid disappointment--Make your holiday Amtrak reservations NOW thru the rail specialists, Let's Travel, 3780 Elizabeth St, Riverside CA 92506. 714-787-8350.

GUATEMALA RAILFAN FUN-TRAIN--Jan 21-Feb 6, 1977--Narrow Gauge steam special train thru GUATEMALA mountains--visit round house and yards. Private cars SOONERLAND and MISTLETOE. Starts in Oklahoma (join anywhere). Write Midwest Travel Service, 2936-R Bella Vista, Midwest City, Oklahoma, 73110--Phone 732-0566.

UNION PACIFIC CHINA: Large selection platters, egg cups, salad bowls, etc. 16 different pieces available "Winged Streamliner," "Desert Flower," "Blue & Gold"; Dining car linens and crystal; Miscellaneous items. SSAE for complete price list. THE PRIVATE CAR, LTD., 3rd & A Sts., Belleville, Ill. 62220.

Private Car No. 5000 "Sun Valley." This refurbished ex-Unión Pacific Cafe Lounge now for sale. Blt in 1949, car is Amtrak-approved and available for inspection in Los Angeles. Seats 40 at tables and lounge chairs. Perfect for private parties, group travel and meetings. T. C. Pearson, 7046 Leewood Forest Dr., Springfield VA 22151. (703) 750-2369.

Deluxe sleeping car for sale: (former "International Bridge," "Imperial Chateau") 10 rooms with enclosed shower bath, structurally sound but needs cosmetic renovations, suitable for tour or stationary use. Bargain at $7,500 F.O.T. New Orleans Details and floor plan, (703) 256-5666.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches); $12.50 per quarter page. Write to: Message Media, Ad Dept., Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

The publication date of RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook 1975 will be announced in these pages as soon as we are absolutely certain of it. If you haven't ordered your copy yet, do so now and be assured of receiving one of this limited printing. RTN's First Yearbook is $3.50 per copy postpaid (Californians please include tax) from: Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

TIMETABLE COLLECTORS' FAIRE, Saturday, November 6, 1976 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Vagabond Motor Hotel, 909 - 3rd Street, Sacramento, admission 50¢. Sponsor: National Ass'n of Timetable Collectors Inc., California-Nevada Section. Info from: Sydney H. Green M.D. 1132 Commons Dr., Sacramento CA 95825. (916) 922-1230.

CAN A PASSENGER TRAIN SURVIVE when most of its riders are non-revenue passengers? At the least, it would make things difficult to have most passengers riding on free passes. And yet Rail Travel News is in a comparable situation. Our estimates indicate that only 25-50% of RTN readers are paying subscribers. Think how RTN could be improved if those non-revenue readers all had their own subscriptions! We appreciate readers showing RTN to their friends, but if they also encourage them to become subscribers themselves, everyone will be happier! RTN will improve, those friends will have their own copies and won't have to wait to see theirs, and we will be grateful. See subscription coupon on rear cover. Thank you!